

June 8, 1914.

Hon. John A. Mead,
Rutland, Vermont.

My dear Governor Mead;

I have your letter of June 6th and we will send you at once fifteen additional copies of my circular letter of June 2 and the same number of commencement programs. I am naturally very much pleased that you have found some one who is interested in putting up a building for Middlebury College. There should be no difficulty in finding something which would be highly useful and contribute both to the growth of the institution and the value of its service.

It seems to me that our first need now is a dormitory for boys on the height beside the new chapel. We have accommodations for only about seventy-five boys, and we have this year one hundred and eighty boys in college. The surplus find boarding places in the village and there are a number of rented fraternity houses. It would be a great deal better in every way if we could have our students together on the hill. I would like to see more of them in college buildings, and what fraternity houses we have in close proximity to the college dormitories. The college is neglecting a great opportunity for moral influence in not paying more attention to the housing and daily life of the boys. We have a fine home for the girls and an officer whose duty it is to supervise them, but we let the boys do absolutely as they please, while they are the ones who need attention more.

Then we especially need a new home for boys for business reasons. The college has not put up a dormitory since 1861, over fifty years. The old idea of a "college hall" was a sort of barracks, a building with public halls and nothing in its general appointments to suggest gentlemanly conduct. I confess that my heart always sinks when a gentleman or lady, coming here with their son, ask me to show them our dormitory rooms. I am not over-fastidious, but I would not want my boy to go to a school which provided no better quarters than we have in Starr and Painter Halls. The rooms themselves are pleasant enough, but the appointments of the buildings are not up to date.

J.A.M. #2

We are getting a class of students now who ~~are~~ afford to pay for respectable rooms and modern conveniences. We would have more if we had the living accommodations for that class of students. They are most profitable to the college, since they are ready to pay tuition and do not ask for scholarships.

Dartmouth College has found its dormitories a profitable investment, clearing as high as ten per cent. I do not say that we could do this, but I am confident that a modern dormitory would bring us in a fair return, at least after the first year or two.

There is another building which should go with the dormitory, a dining hall for the men of the college, with rooms for the Y.M.C.A., reading room, and general social purposes. Our present dining hall would be too far removed from a new dormitory on the hill, and is inadequate even for the present number of students. We have no appropriate Y.M.C.A. rooms and a boy is practically obliged to join a fraternity to have the social facilities which he needs. With the growth of the college a good many are not members of fraternities. It would do much to bring all the men of the college together if we had a common meeting place for social purposes. Such buildings in other institutions have proved highly useful.

If neither of these objects appeal to your friend, I am sure the day is coming when we shall be obliged to have a new recitation hall. At present the chapel is the only building we can use for recitations in other than scientific branches. It has been crowded for many years. As you know my office is in the chapel, while the other college offices are in Winter Hall. This is a great inconvenience. We should use one entire floor of this central building for administration purposes, but we cannot take the room until we have another recitation hall.

So you see there is abundant opportunity for any one to be of great service to our college through additions to our plant, to say nothing of endowments or professorships. There would be a great advantage in putting up a second building at the same time as the chapel and I have no doubt we could get better figures from contractors if two went together. I need not say that I shall be glad

J.A.M. #3

to go into this subject farther and to help along the good work in any way I can.

I enclose further letters from members of the Corporation approving plans for the new chapel.

Faithfully yours,